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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the development and management of an intercollegiate forensics program at a small college. It first deals with the context for analyzing a program, and then discusses the analysis itself, which should provide the foundation for a program's development. Some points for program management follow, and the paper concludes with a list of potentially useful resources. The sections are as follows: (1) The Context for the Analysis; (2) Getting Started; (3) The Analysis (who is being served, what function will the program serve, where in the list of departmental priorities will the program fall, what kind of program will evolve, how will such a program be handled); (4) Some Comments on Program Management; and (5) Suggested Sources for Program Assistance. (SR)

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Managing a Responsive and Reponsible Forensics Program in a Small College

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Managing a Responsive and Reponsible Forensics Program in a Small College

One of the biggest juggling acts that a teacher in a small college can be called on to perform is to juggle a forensics program that is both responsive and responsible. We want programs that are responsive to our students' needs and wishes, but also that are responsive to the missions and priorities of our respective departments or programs (and hence to our colleges themselves), and also to the personal and professional needs and goals of our faculty members. We also want programs that are responsible to those same areas: students; department, program, and college; and teaching staff. At times responsiveness and responsibility seem to come into conflict; at times the needs of the different constituencies seem to come into conflict. When this happens, our task as faculty members, program administrators, or department chairs is to sort things out.

The purpose of this paper is to look at the development and management of an intercollegiate forensics program at a small college, and to provide some considerations that will help in the sorting out process noted above. I will first of all provide a context for analyzing a program and then discuss the analysis itself. Such an analysis should provide the foundation for a program's development. I'll follow that with some points for program management, and conclude briefly with a list of resources which might provide some assistance in developing or running a program.

The Context for Your Analysis

You may have inherited a program already in place. If so, your arrival as someone new can provide a catalyst for the departmental decision-makers to look at the program and its development to date. Or you may wish to start a program. If so, you will want to get it started on the best possible foundation. Finally, you may have had your program for years. If so, you might benefit from analyzing the direction of its development, and asking yourself if that is the best way for it to go.

Throughout,it is important to keep in mind the overall mission of your institution itself, and also the focus of your particular program. As each institution and program is different, so the kind of forensics program each should have will be different.

Getting Started

A look at your institutional and departmental mission statement is a good place to begin. If you can't find it, don't be surprized. Smitter and MacDoniels ["Departmental Objectives: How Do Small College Programs Define their Mission?" Roger Smitter and Joseph MacDoniels, paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, April 4-6, 1985] found that very few departments had mission statements, or even very clear objectives or priorities. If your department doesn't have them...take a giant step sideways and lay them out. Planning is irrelevant without goals and priorities. If you don't know where you want to go, any road will take you there...

Once you have your departmental mission or priority list of objectives before you, you are ready to consider your forensics program. The better its foundation, the better chance the program itself will have to be effective, responsive, and responsible. My suggestion is that you take a very simple "Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How" approach to your program's development as the basis for your analysis.

The Analysis

1 Who (or whom) are you trying to serve? Who is the most important? Another way to ask this is: whose idea was this, anyway???

Are you responding to student interest or enthusiasm? If so, ask yourself about those students--their motivation, their abilities, their commitment to the program, their prior experiences. Are they juniors or seniors who will be gone by the time you get your program into place, or are they first year students who will be able to grow with the program? How many of them are there? Where on their list of academic and personal activities will the forensics program fit? Just as you want to avoid the syndrome of nobody wanting to bake the bread but everyone wanting to eat it, you want to avoid the syndrome of working very hard to bake bread nobody wants to eat.... or who will be gone when the bread itself is ready.

Do the enthusiasts have academic reasons for wanting to engage in the activity, or are the reasons largely social ones? Are the students looking for a way to interact less formally with each other and with departmental members, to exercise a sense of comraderie or departmental identity? If the latter is the case, some activity other than a forensics program may serve just as well...or even better. The demands of an intercollegiate forensic program may preclude participation by all members of the department and can separate as well as unite. Since the primary activity takes place off campus, identification with the department itself may be difficult to achieve. A research or discussion club or a group with a service project may be a better idea.

Do you have a group of individuals who did well in speech activities in high school and want to make their marks that same way in college? They may be out for individual achievement over team achievement, and will give you another kind of problem. Another kind of activity is also a better solution to their need for recognition or involvement with campus activities. Prima donnas, or dons, you don't need!

The support for the program may come from an individual <u>faculty</u> member. He or she may have participated as an undergraduate or as a TA coach, and valued the social relationships, the skill building, and the recognition that an effective program can bring about. Make sure that <u>this</u> is the faculty member who will have responsibility for coaching or assisting with your program...not someone else! If the enthusiasm keeps up after the responsibility is given out, you may have a winner.

Your <u>administration</u> may want such a program for some of the above reasons. If you do not share them, you will need to impress upon those administrators the tremendous amount of time, energy, and money such a program will involve; you will also have to be sure that the reward to you and your program is worth the outlay of personal and professional resources. Furthermore, forensics is different than it used to be. Make sure your administrators understand these activities TODAY. Look also for the motivation they have for wanting the program. It may be that there is some other, better, way to reach these goals than a forensics team.

However, <u>YOU or your department</u> may want the program. This is, of course, the best reason to have it. If you are to be happy in and with it, this is the only reason to have it.

2. "Why"--or, what function will your program serve?

Your program may serve many purposes:

a) academic, or formal extensions of the classroom
b) co-curricular, or reinforcement of classroom learning
c) extracurricular, or to provide an enjoyable and useful activity for student interaction
d) program visability, or to attract campus recognition, publicity, or support; to increase student enrollment in courses; or to help attract potential majors to your department.

While the latter, or indeed any, of these functions, can be met in a variety of ways, a lively and well organized forensics program is certainly one way to meet them. Additionally, of course, your program may serve several functions.

However, before you commit yourself to such a program, ask yourself if an intercollegiate forensics program is the best way to meet that need. This is a time, money, and energy-consuming activity if it is to be handled responsibly. Are there other ways to give your students continued experience in public speaking performances of different types? To continue their skill building? A student speakers' bureau might be a better idea, where students talk to real audiences about real issues. Are there other ways to provide social interaction that is useful to the students? (and to others?) Perhaps a big brother or sister project between your speech majors and language-handicapped children in the community would be a better way to provide social interaction for the students and also provide a meaningful service for the community. It can also provide some interesting publicity for your program. Forensics activities, however, take place off campus--if your goal is program visability, an on-campus activity might better serve that purpose, such as a student consulting or tutoring service for oral presentations in other classes, or a workship in communication skills for campus leaders.

If you decide the program is curricular or co-curricular, you need to deal with the question of academic credit. The course itself should receive academic credit on par with the other offerings in your department. Whether it is for one credit (co-curricular offering, generally) or for three or four credits (curricular), teaching the course

should be built in to the departmental offerings and faculty teaching load. Frankly, I recommend a three or four credit course, which students take their first term in the program. They might continue their academic involvement with a one credit co-curricular course. This course, even for one credit, will be the most time-consuming activity its faculty teacher-coach will have; to receive no or one credit for teaching it is an unforgivable imposition. Even if it is taught as an overload, have the three or four credit overload on the books as an acknowledgement of the faculty member's time and expertise.

Grading a course given for credit is another consideration. If the course is a part of the regular curriculum, treat it as such and grade it as you would a public speaking or oral interpretation course. Test on theory as well as performance. Keep win-loss record separate from the grading for the course. The same is true of a one-credit co-curricular course. This would be equivalent to singing in the college choir, for example, and is normally graded pass-fail. Nevertheless, win-loss should again be kept separate from the grade, otherwise you will find <u>other</u> people, and such things as scheduling, in effect "grading" your student. You want to reserve that for yourself, as part of your right and responsibility as a teacher.

One way or another, you will have to face the question of teaching versus coaching, and here is a significant point of responsibility in your program. As a coach, you want your students to win. As a teacher, you want them to develop their individual best. I encourage the teacher format as the more responsible, but your own circumstances may make the coaching to win the better choice.

One way this conflict will present itself is in such factors as finding selections for oral interpretation and topics and research information for public speaking. This is the most difficult stage for the student, and can be the critical stage from an event-winning point of view. How much help do you give your students as a teacher? As a coach? What if your student selects a perfectly acceptable piece of literature for performance, or a topic of reasonable general interest--but which can be expected to have little appeal to judges in the contest format? Do you veto or discourage its use? The forensics circuit is a very specialized context, so teaching the sense of adapting to the audience or the situation becomes repetitive after a while, and student material can become narrow in form and content if it is focused to win in the contest setting.

Furthermore, in most speech classes, the extemporaneous format is encouraged for public speaking. Manuscript or memorized speeches are discouraged. Just the opposite is true in public speaking contests. The problem can be partially offset by having your students compete in several types of events, so that they become familiar with both methods of presentation, but "extemp" and "impromptu" as categories are still different from using extemporaneous delivery for an informative or persuasive speech. And extemp presentations in these latter contest categories generally do not win.

"Winning" selections in oral interpretation events are similarly narrow in form and presentation style. For example, the first person narrative is the typical selection in both prose and poetry, and selections requiring skill in descriptive narration or presentation of complex verse structure succeed less often. "Dramatic" elements in interp of drama and in dramatic duo, as well as in prose and poetry, tend to displace excellent sensitive or lightly-handled material. A coach directs the students into "winning" material, a teacher into challenging literature. The teacher-coach has a dilemma.

Coaches as well as teachers are aware of these problems, as convention programs on coaching and judging problems in forensics events bear witness. Another responsibility of a teacher-coach is to become a part of the ongoing dialogue on such issues. Eventually, through the committed action of coaches who are also teachers, much of such conflict may be reduced. I doubt that it will ever be entirely eliminated.

3. *Where* in the list of departmental priorities will your program fall? *When* conflicts arise, and they will, which gives?

Conflicts can arise from differences in values and in perspectives as well as from scarce resources. All three can be present in a program.

Your administration may value winning, and you teaching... or vice versa. There may be value differences among the faculty members in the department and among those involved in the coaching, and there may be such conflicts between coaches and students and among the students themselves. A responsible program will have a focus somewhere along the continuum, a focus that is responsive to the particular circumstances of department, institution, faculty, and students. Once this is discovered or

decided, it must be articulated for and eventually by all concerned. A student who does not believe "winning isn't everything, it is the only thing" will be eaten alive in a highly competitive program, especially if he or she doesn't fully understand what is happening. Similarly, a hardware-motivated student, coach, or administration will become increasingly frustrated by a "laid-back" approach to a program, and considerable dissention and hard feelings can result.

Values will partly account for the perspective taken on a given issue, along with circumstances of the moment, individual needs, and such things as friendships and social relationships. These factors will guide any decision being made, and they should be recognized and understood at the outset. Having program priorities clearly specified in advance helps provide a more objective criteria for decision-making. The decisions may involve such things as student attendance at a given tournement versus remaining on campus for an important exam or guest speaker in a class; or who among several students are selected to attend a "special" tournament--the one who wins easily but doesn't work hard because he or she doesn't really have to, or the hard-working but average competetor; or whether or not students are encouraged to try diverse events, topics, and styles for the experience or are helped to do one or two events really well so that they will have a better chance of qualifying for competition at nationals.

And resources are always scarce--energy, time, and money. How much classtime can your coaches and students miss in order to compete effectively? Do you and they expend more energy on forensics or on academics? How many students make a speech trip--fewer so you can make more trips, or more so everyone can compete? Do you and students supplement the departmental budget by assisting with your own meal expenses? If you are funded out of a departmental budget, do you spend the money on guest speakers for classes or on speech trips? A responsible program does not merely react to problems when they arise; a responsible program has analyzed in advance program priorities and can use them as a guide to help determine an approproate decision.

4. What kind of program will you have?

The answer to this is of course suggested in your previous answers. Your program will exist on several continua. It will be focused primarily

on student, faculty, administrative, or departmental needs; it will have an emphesis ranging from the purely academic to the purely extra-curricular; it will be directed to a point somewhere between winning and learning; it will seek to develop the abilities of several fine and enthusiastic speakers or provide an opportunity for everyone to compete a little, learn something, and have a good time; it will shape the focus of departmental decisions or respond to them. It can be a responsible program at any point on these continua. The critical question is not where it falls, but rather whether or not its directors and participants understand where it falls, and whether or not it is responsive to and consistent with departmental and program priorities.

5 *How* will you handle such a program?

This leads me to the second part of the paper, managing a forensics program. Assuming you are clear, or at any rate, clearer, on the kind of program you wish to have, how do you go about doing this?

Debate and drama are group activities. Forensics can be managed entriely on a one-to-one basis between students and coach, which gives it more flexibility in size and scheduling than those other programs. However, I recommend that you still maintain the group emphasis as much as possible. The team does well or poorly, not one individual person.

The first session Start the year with a group meeting for new and returning students to explain your program philosophy and format. The coach should handle this meeting, introducing students "assistants" who will help with the program. These may be departmental assistants, experienced participants, or even newcomers who have done particular events before if you have a new program. Meet for a time as a group each week for several weeks, to help establish the "team feeling." It is important that there be a regular meeting time for forensics, whether or not you have a formal class scheduled. You and the students need to think in terms of "If this is Tuesday, there must be forensics at 4, or at 7, or whenever." At this first meeting it is a good idea to outline the season so that students may begin to plan their off-campus days and prepare their schoolwork in advance. Also, ground-rules for participation should be outlined, and at this meeting I go over my "Ten Commandments for Forensicators" from the "Gospel According to Buzza." My students also learn how and when they may come for coaching, how and when they are

selected for participation in an individual tournament, and when group and sub-group meetings are. We meet as a whole group to discuss general forensics issues, then divide into three groups dealing with oral interpretation, public speaking, and limited preparation events. A student assistant is assigned as an assistant coach for each of these three areas.

Within each grouping each specific event is explained and demonstrated by someone who has done the event before. Then brainstorming for ideas occurs--for interp selections or themes, for speech topics, and for likely draws for extemp and impromptu speeches. The latter group begins to prepare an idea and research file to share, and the former two groups begin to hunt for material. I also recommend your scheduling a special session at your library, focusing on how to do research on topics and how to find good literature to perform. Frequently your library staff will conduct such a session.

Subsequent sessions. After the first month the students work in their groups with partners and with their student coaches, and schedule individual appointments with me. I also attend the group sessions at least every other time. When students come to see me they should have something to show me--a topic list, an outline, a draft, or a presentation to react to. They know I have little time or interest in doing their work for them, but I will be glad to respond to what they have done and to make suggestions once they give me something to work with.

Time management for coaches. I am also not available "just anytime" to hear speeches or to talk about forensics, although I was when I began coaching. Here my priorities have shifted based on both departmental and personal needs, and forensics is no longer the focus of our program although we still maintain an active and successful team. However, I post weekly hours when I am available to work with students, so I am able to manage my own time more effectively to handle other responsibilities along with forensics. It took a little while to make the change-over, since students had been used to 100% of my time, but by now they take it for granted that if they ask if they can see me I will refer them to the sign up sheet for the week. I will adjust those times if necessary to meet the class or work schedule of a particular student, but I also expect the students to adjust their personal schedules to accommodate the time I have available for forensics. We are all busy people with many commitments.

Student commitment levels Students are expected to identify themselves as wanting to compete at the varsity, junior varsity, and "speech club" level. The varsity includes those students who want to compete in as many events as possible, and to attend every tournament. There are fewer of these students than 14 years ago, reflecting in many cases the diversity of other interests students now have and the lesser role that speech has played in their earlier, high school experiences.

The junior varsity are those students who want to compete in several tournaments each semester, in the two events which I require for an overnight meet. By second semester, many of these students will have added a third event, but these students are less highly motivated for the competition and particpate more for personal and social reasons. I regard these students as as important to the program as the varsity, and they considerably outweigh the varsity in numbers. The problem comes when they try to make themselves, or me, believe that they really want to be competing at the varsity level, and they do not have the motivation and self-discipline to work that hard. Motivation is really the differentiating factor between varsity and jv, not ability.

Occasionally a student who wants to be on the varsity is not very good, so that grouping has a second criteria, that of "Being ready for varsity level competition." To help determine this we have an intersquad meet about two weeks before our first tournament. Several faculty colleagues, who know me well and who understand forensics, serve as critic judges--two to a round. All students present their speeches (varsity must have 2 prepared, JV must have 1) and the critics evaluate them and make written comments. After reading the comments I assign people to varsity or junior varsity; junior varsity may move up to varsity status when their work is "ready," and they are assisted in improving their work. The comments also help the students polish their speeches before that first competition, providing feedback to supplement my own.

The number on the varsity team is determined by how many people we have space for in the college vehicles we use for travel. We take junior varsity people as well as varsity people if space is available, but all jv people are guaranteed two tournaments a semester. I designate in advance which these are--generally the closer and thus less expensive meets. JV members who have conflicts they tell me about in advance are accommodated at one of the other meets.

You may be wondering about the students who are in the "speech club." These are all the people who tell me they are going to write a speech over the weekend, but never do.... I don't worry much about them. When they talk with me or a student assistant I make a mental note of them, but no one is on the team until a piece of work is completed. I am happy to have them in the "club," and these people are invited to our activities and programs...I just don't assume I'll ever see them at a tournament until I first see a piece of finished work. The student has the responsibility for producing the work.

This has been a convenient designation for several students who have a heavy schedule for a semester and have to drop out of the program, or who competed as a first year student or a sophomore but who have developed a greater interest in campus politics or a fraternity or sorority as a junior or senior. These people can help serve as coaches occasionally, help out at the early forensics team meetings with demonstrations of events or topic ideas, and participate in some of the social activities. But they and we know that there are no expectations of intercollegiate competition. This has been a wonderful compromise for several students who felt they "should" be out for forensics, but whose hearts weren't really in it. Because of that, forensics was always left to last and thus poorly done, it it was done at all. Here the students can feel a part of the program without guilt, and I can use them to help out here and there when needed--but they are no longer a drain on team finances and the time and energy of us all!. Again, problems occur here only when students are unwilling or unable to see personal priorities and say honestly that they want to participate, but not compete. Once they feel reassured that regard for them as individuals does not depend on whether or not they are out for forensics, such honesty is easier.

By now you may have figured out that I am not trying to have as many people as possible out for forensics... However, I am not, to paraphrase the Marine Corps, only looking for a "few good speakers." The program at Ripon seeks to be responsive to the needs of students who are motivated to learn and grow as speakers, willing to work, and to share the responsibility for their participation. We can also accommodate a few highly motivated and talented speakers. Few small college programs can afford the time, the money, or the energy involved in taking as many students as possible to every tournament. Students committed to the program for its academic and personal development possibilities, and its

opportunities for social interaction, and who are willing to share in the development of both themselves and the program--these are the students for whom your program should be responsive is if it is to be responsible to all persons involved.

Some Comments on Program Management

While I have made the major points in the above sections, I do have a few comments I wish to make regarding staffing and budgeting, bearing in mind the theme of maintaining a responsible program.

Be aware that coaching and administering a forensics program will involve considerable work by the faculty member involved. This person should receive full academic credit hours for that work. Furthermore, people in the department, other departments, and the administration need to realize that this person is maintaining other faculty responsibilities on a three or four-day week, because life and teaching go on despite the coach's being out town most Fridays and weekends from October through March. Release time from other responsibilities in the department and the college should be provided or some sort of compensating elements should be arranged. In particular, the role of coaching in considerations for tenure and promotion should be openly discussed and mutually agreed upon. Coaching tasks can be traded or shared as much as possible to help minimize coach burnout. Particular sensitivity must be shown toward the stresses which a coaching schedule places on a coach's personal life.

It is not only the time away from campus on weekends that must be managed by the coach, but also the one-on-one coaching itself. Everyone moans about pre-registration, when appointments with some twenty people or more must be mananged in the space of a week or two. The forensics coach has to manage this every week. Ideally, each student should have one hour of coaching one-on-one per event per week. Assume you have six people out for forensics, and each is doing two events. You now heve 12 hours you should schedule, or else feel you should, in addition to your other teaching and faculty responsibilities, and you have only Monday to Thursday to do it in because you leave Friday morning for a meet and you will be off campus until late Saturday night. And Monday is another week....

If your college, your department, and your faculty are not ready to handle such a schedule you cannot reasonably expect to have a highly competitive program. You can expect to have stress and burnout.

Furthermore, the time and telephone calls needed to get a team on the road are considerable. There are transportation and housing to arrange, an entry and judges to plan for, requisitions, insurance, excused absences, and related paperwork. Most telephone calls seem to require three tries to get through, and just when you have everything arranged one student gets laryngitis and another cannot get excused from an exam... So you start again. An hour or two a week can be spent simply in program administration, and I think you can see why I spoke in favor of students assuming their share of the responsibiltiy for a forensics program. You don't have time for, and you shouldn't make the time for, calling each of them to see if they've decided whether or not they want to go next weekend... The basketball coach doesn't play that game, and neither should you.

Funding your program is another aree of concern. The best program is one that is funded through a departmental budget, just as the drama department funds its productions and the chemistry department funds its test tubes. You haven't time to raise money along with everything else, and getting caught up in student activities funding makes your program responsible to someone other than the department itself. If at all possible, try for funding of an academic program through academic sources. Only failing that, try other means. And throughout you should stress the academic elements of your program, seeking at least co-curricular status. Only then will you get your coach's efforts at least partly acknowledged.

Alumni donations may be an area overlooked as a funding source for a program, or an "angel" somewhere who might help underwrite hiring a coach or an assistant coach, or some of the travel. You should of course work through your Development Office for these. Ripon has benefitted from an "anonymous donor" who has assisted with a grant so that we may have a debate as well as a forensics program.

Hosting a high school tournament is a great deal of work and will not necessarily provide you much profit. Your state high school activities association should be contacted about your scheduling such a tournament

and your accommodating any state requirements and customary practices. You also need a large number of well trained students to help you run the tournament; enthusiasm alone will not suffice and can at times cause more problems than it helps resolve.

Hosting a college tournament also takes time. It does provide some program visability on your campus, however (as does the high school tournament), and can be a good way of providing nearby competition for your neighboring colleges. Be sure you work out your schedule and rules to accommodate common tournament practices in your area, however, and don't plan to get rich on the proceeds. There are other reasons than financial ones for hosting a college tournament.

Consider the possibility of hosting a workshop instead of a tournament, by the way. You may make as much money on it, will find it far easier to arrange, and it may provide a more valuable service to the high schools or colleges in your area than does a complicated and expensive tournament.

In managing your budget, some coaches are able to share a room with students and in other ways cut corners. This is easier to do, I have found, if you are younger... I also believe it is important to maintain some distance between you and your team, physical and psychological. Students already have friends and student assistants to go to for help. They also need a coach. You and they will need to establish the balance in your interpersonal relationships that will enable you to play, and them to respond to, coach-student roles. Maintaining separate housing arrangements and social activities may be one way to help do this. In the end, it may be worth the money.

Suggested Sources for Program Assistance

Some of the comments above may be applicable to a debate as well as a forensics program. If you have neither, you may want to explore both possibilities before deciding. Attached are some people, organizations, and publications that may help you get started or deal with an unexpected problem.

SCA Small College Committee

Leanne Wolf, Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio
Bonnie Buzza, Ripon College, Ripon, Wisconsin until August, 1988, then at the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio
two persons in the central states area who are active in the small college committee and who have debate and forensics experience

Cross Examination Debate Association: Michael Bartanen, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington
has regional representatives on advisory council; publishes national tournament calendar; publishes yearbooks with theory and practical advice; membership gets you on mailing lists

American Debate Association: Warren Decker, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia
a new league which was founded at the 1987 SCA convention, to help make debate more conversational and communicative

American Forensic Association: Jim Pratt, University of Wisconsin at River Falls, Wisconsin
national individual events tournament (or AFA-NIET) for forensics, along with national debate tournament (or NDT). but for debate I recommend that most small schools pursue membership in CEDA or the new ADA, listed above; use AFA for help with forensics: the AFA has district chairs who handle area tournaments and give assistance; it publishes a national tournament calendar and has a journal; membership gets you on mailing lists for materials

National Forensic Association: Christine Reynolds, University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire, Wisconsin
has a national tournament and provides other services

Honorary Associations (holding national tournaments; journals; could offer assistance)
Pi Kappa Delta: Harold Widvey, South Dakota State University, Brookings, South Dakota
Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha: Sheryl A. Friedley, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

High School Forensics Associations or groups such as
National Forensic League, Ripon, Wisconsin: Jim Copeland

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association
Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association
Wisconsin Forensic Coaches Association
publish handbooks and manuals on events, tournament management, judging, etc.; may be able to suggest aree people who could help you (your state will have similar organizations)

Speech Communication Association
could recommend people to help you
has publications and could suggest resources
ERIC resources and bibliographies; articles; convention papers

There are countless suppliers of handbooks and evidence cards for both NDT and CEDA debate; there are a variety of books available on debate, debate coaching, and tournament management(in addition to handbooks availeble from groups like the high school coaches' associations noted above)

It is difficult to find a good book on preparing and doing forensics events; the AFA and NFA publish event descriptions which serve as "rules" for the events at most tournaments. An ERIC search for books or articles and papers from speech conventions, dealing with coaching forensics, follows.

Some contacts for help with theatre

Association for Theatre in Higher Education--Programs of Limited Size
Duncan Smith, Chair ATHE-TPLS
Department of English and Theatre Arts
Hartwick College
Oneonta, NY 13820

Mark A. Heckler, ATHE-TPLS Vice Chair for Conferences
Department of Fine Arts: theatre
Siena College
Loudonville, NY 12211

Central States:
Jim De Young, Monmouth College, Monmouth, Illinois
Rufus Cadigan, Rockford College, Rockford, Illinois

Southern States:
Joyce Webb, Shepherd College, Shepherdstown, West Virginia
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